

TAA is in need of significant reform and modification. For instance, under the existing program, the criteria for the TAA benefits are too restrictive, and excludes too many workers who are clearly dislocated by trade and need assistance, including secondary workers—such as those working for companies that supply factories or manufacturing facilities that go out of business as a result of trade. Secondly, the program contains a confusing variety of eligibility requirements, depending on which form of TAA is desired—including those under the NAFTA-TAA program, which is designed to assist workers dislocated specifically because of NAFTA. Third, the current program provides 2 years of training, but only 18 months of COBRA assistance over that same period of time. Too often when the payments stop, people are forced to discontinue their training. Fourth, if a person goes back to work at a part-time job, he or she loses eligibility for TAA training, which is contrary to recent trends in other forms of public assistance. Finally, one of the most difficult problems displaced workers face is that their next job often pays much less than their previous job. About one-third of such workers face this circumstance, and older workers are especially hard hit.

This legislation proposes improving upon the current system in a number of ways, including the establishment of allowances, training, job search, relocation and support service assistance to secondary workers, and workers affected by shifts in production. This measure would also harmonize existing TAA and NAFTA/TAA programs to provide more effective and efficient results for individuals and communities. Realizing the difficulty for older workers to change careers, this legislation would facilitate on-the-job training and faster re-employment by providing wage insurance for up to 2 years for part of the gap between old and new earnings levels. Additionally, this legislation would increase income maintenance from 52 to 78 weeks, substantially increase funds available for training, and ensure that workers who take a part-time job don't lose training benefits. This legislation would also provide a tax credit for 50 percent of COBRA payments, increase assistance for job relocation, and link TAA recipients to child care and health care benefits under existing programs. This bill would also recognize the special circumstances faced by family farmers, ranchers and independent fishermen, and would seek to provide assistance and consulting before they lose their businesses. In addition to current practice, the President, the Senate Finance Committee, and the House Ways and Means Committee would be able, by resolution, to initiate a TAA certification process for an affected industry.

To help communities respond to job losses more quickly and efficiently, this bill would strengthen the state-based Workforce Investment Act ("WIN") programs to expedite trade adjustment assistance applications. As a part of TAA reform, this measure would encourage greater cooperation between federal, state, regional, and local agencies that deal with individuals receiving trade adjustment assistance. At present, individuals receiving trade adjustment assistance can obtain counseling from one-stop shops in their region, but typically this is limited to information related to allowances and training. Information concerning funds available through other Federal depart-

ments and agencies is frequently not available, including information on health care for individuals and their families. To prevent the creation of duplicative programs and to use the funds that are currently available, this legislation would establish an inter-agency working group on trade adjustment assistance be created and that a inter-agency database on Federal, State, and local resources available to TAA recipients be established.

Mr. Speaker, passage of this legislation is extremely important, as it directly addresses the question of how Congress will assist those workers and communities negatively impacted by international trade. It is also long overdue, as Congress has discussed reform of the trade adjustment assistance programs for a number of years. I believe it is time to act, and I think we have a unique opportunity to act in that there is interest both in Congress and the Administration to improve the trade adjustment assistance programs in a fundamental and a beneficial way. Congress should pass legislation that will make these improvements in the trade adjustment assistance program, and I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2001—THE F.A.C.T. ACT

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 28, 2001

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join today with Congressman HENRY WAXMAN, the Ranking Member of the Government Reform Committee, to introduce legislation that will require the President's Commission on Social Security to keep their meetings free and open to the public.

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), which governs the President's Social Security Commission, requires all meetings to be open to the public. However, under guidance issued quietly by the General Services Administration last summer, this Commission and others governed by FACA have been allowed to meet in secret subgroups. This was never the intention of FACA. The F.A.C.T. Act will close this loophole.

The President's Commission on Social Security has taken advantage of this loophole on at least two occasions. Each time, Mr. WAXMAN and I have written to the Commission expressing our deep concern for these secret subgroup meetings, to no avail. The Commission has refused to open its subgroup work to the public, necessitating introduction of this legislation.

Social Security Reform affects the lives of millions of Americans and is a critical source of income for retirees, disabled workers, and surviving spouses and children. The privatization of Social Security makes the financial challenges of the system substantially worse, necessitating large cuts in these critical benefits. Deliberations and decisions that result in this outcome should not take place behind closed doors. There is too much at stake for America's families.

HUMAN EMBRYO CLONING

HON. RONNIE SHOWS

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 28, 2001

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, the cloning of a human embryo goes far beyond the fact that it is bad public policy. We are not a society, I say we are not a creation of God, that would make a life in order to kill it. This is what is happening and this is what we must stop now. The farming of human embryos, human lives, for use as laboratory test rats is a frightening and destructive direction this nation, this society, would take.

The single responsible measure we can take is to stop human cloning now before a slow numbing acceptance takes place.

Douglas Johnson at National Right to Life said, "Each of us began our individual life as an embryo. We were human when we were embryos, and these cloned embryos are human lives too. Once begun, human lives—including human lives begun by cloning—should be protected, not killed to provide biological raw material." He is right.

We must expand on the Human Cloning Prohibition Act, H.R. 2505, passed in July and make human embryo cloning completely illegal.

RECOGNIZING DIANE CAREY WOODRUFF

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 28, 2001

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Diane Carey Woodruff, who is retiring after 13 years of service with Napa Valley College.

She joined the campus in 1988 and served as Vice President of Instruction and Student Services for five years. In 1992 she was selected President of the College, the first and only woman to achieve this honor in the school's 60-year history, and has served her community with distinction.

Under her leadership, a second campus was built, as were four other buildings at the main campus, the Child Care Center, the Community Education Center, the Trefethen Family Viticultural Center, and the Napa Valley Vintners Teaching Winery. The latter two facilities were 100 percent funded through community contributions.

President Woodruff also successfully persuaded employers in the community to fund five faculty positions.

During her tenure, the Napa Valley College Foundation became one of the top ten community colleges foundations in California in terms of providing mini grants, equipment, scholarships, and an endowed chair to the college.

President Woodruff also developed a "Naming Opportunities Program" to develop new programs and to increase financial support for the college. The Belle Rhodes Teaching Kitchen, the Elizabeth Brereton Conference room, the Jess and Mary Doud Distance Learning Center, the Virginia Murdoff Counseling Center, and the Ann Marie Koropkin Student Center have all benefited under her leadership.